Recommendations - road construction

It is obvious that for the development of Paktika Province itself, there is an urgent need for road construction. In addition, Paktika Province is also a gateway to Ghazni and other provinces. As the population is relatively small and very widely spread, it is recommended that the UN financially supports suitable implementing partners to create mobile "road construction teams" (RCTs). This would not only include the recruitment of an Afghan labour force mainly from the refugee population in Pakistan, but, of course, also from inside Afghanistan, if available. The RCTs would consist of management personnel, engineers, surveyors, drivers, labourers, cooks, etc. The RCT would be equipped with the necessary road construction machinery and tools. The idea would be that RCT-personnel would live on-site and would have to be supplied with "board and lodging", e.g. tents and food. The RCT staff would be employed at an appropriate remuneration, possibly in the form of a "cash/food for work" concept. Possible implementing partners could be suitably qualified NGOs or RAFA.

For the implementation, it will be necessary for the UNDP to send a qualified road engineer and a qualified Afghan, to survey what has to be done and make the necessary detailed specifications, so that the appropriate equipment can be purchased to carry out the work in the spring. The UNDP-staff member could fit into the context of a SMU.

2. Fuel

All petrol and diesel is imported from Pakistan, as is most of the engine oils, although at Mushkhil some supplies had been obtained from Kabul. Fuel is imported in 200-litre drums. It appears that there are no bulk storage facilities nor proper handling systems, with the consequent risk of fuel contamination.

The mission was asked several times if the UN could assist in improving the fuel situation, i.e. through transporting sufficient quantities and helping to bring down prices by purchasing directly from Pakistan oil companies. Presently, fuel supplies are purchased at Azam Warsak or Wana (see Annex for present prices at different locations).

Recommendations - fuel

UN should have discussions with the GOP regarding the export to Afghanistan of petroleum products, i.e. diesel, kerosene, petrol and lubricating oils. Together with an appropriate implementing partner, the UN should investigate possible fuel storage systems. One system that could be implemented relatively quickly is by keeping standard 20 ft shipping containers with a

rubber "bladder" inside at different locations. The UN should consider obtaining fuel tanker trucks if GOP agrees to the export of P.O.L. Fuel for agriculture is the main objective of these recommendations.

3. Storage

The mission's observations on available storage is appended below:

Sorobi

There is a one-way small stone building with a concrete roof, which also contains a teashop, in an area considered to be the centre of Sorobi. The store's capacity is about 30 metric tons and is adjacent to the old Administrative Centre.

Urgun

This town had the best warehouses that the mission saw in Paktika Province. The voluntary organization known as ESAR is in the final stages of completing the construction of a warehouse funded by UNHCR. It is estimated to hold 3 - 400 MT of wheat.

The following statistics were provided by the ESAR engineer at Urgun:

Cost of material

Bricks: 1.000 - Rs. 500 (1 brick weighs 1.6 kg)

Cement: 1 bag (50 kg) - Rs. 100

Transportation

Wana to Angurada:

- 1.000 bricks: Rs. 700, including loading/unloading
- 6.5 metric tons of mild steel rod: Rs. 2.500
- 1 bag cement: Rs. 10 - 20, including loading/unloading

Angurada to Urgun:

- 1.000 bricks: Rs. 2.000
- 1 bag cement: Rs. 40
- 6.5 metric tons of mild steel rod: Rs. 2.600, not including loading/unloading

Adjacent to this building is a larger type building with an all-metal girder frame and clad with corrugated iron. Due to the hostilities, it is slightly damaged, but could easily be repaired. It has a good concrete floor and is ideally suited for storing food stuffs. It has an estimated capacity` of 1.000 metric tons and was apparently built as part of a West German sponsored rural development project.

Within 100 meters of the 2 above-mentioned buildings, there is a walled compound, approximately 100 by 50 m, with 2 brick buildings with C.I. roofs (also part of the West German sponsored project). Both buildings are approximately 90 by 5 m. One is designed as a store, with 2 large double doors: one at the end of the building and one in the middle. The other building is divided into 3 parts: one half is a store, with double doors at one end and the other half consists of a workshop/garage and an office-section, containing 2 offices, which are now being used by RAFA. The workshop section has 2 double doorways: one at the end of the building and one at the side. The doors, as well as the window frames, are missing. The workshop has an inspection pit. Estimated usable storage capacity is 600 metric tons total.

The mission is of the opinion that adequate warehousing exists in Urgun for at least the immediate future.

Sharan

Here the mission did not see specialized storage facilities. However, there are 2 good buildings that had been used for the storage of the recently delivered UN wheat: the clinic and the "white house", the local government administrative building.

Construction of a warehouse similar to the ESAR/HCR one at Urgun, is considered necessary.

Zarghun Shah

No specialized storage available, but, as reported by Salam 6, there is the Zarghun Shah Fort with its many buildings. However, it is understood that mines could still be a problem in and around the Fort.

Waza Khwa

As in Sharan, a former clinic and an administrative building (in which RAFA has an office) are presently used as warehouses, as and when required. A small room, at the base of a look-out tower (6 MT capacity) near a small fort, is

used in the same way. There were some other buildings of local construction in the fort area, which the mission was not encouraged to visit. Construction of a warehouse is recommended for Waza Khwa.

Gomal

There is no real town centre in this area, as the villages constituting Gomal are widely spread out. RAFA has recently constructed an office at a, according to them, central location, to serve the surrounding population. As there is no warehouse around Gomal, the construction of a store in the vicinity of the RAFA office would be desirable.

Recommendations - storage

It is recommended that warehouses, similar to the one being built at Urgun by ESAR/HCR, should be constructed at Sorobi, Sharan and Waza Khwa, using local stone for the walls (apparently, for the Urgun store, bricks were imported from Pakistan, due to the mine problem).

At Zarghun Shah, real efforts should be made to rehabilitate the buildings in the fort area, which then could be used for stores and many other purposes (upon ensuring mine-clearance).

4. Shelter and other buildings

Many houses and community buildings in Paktika Province, throughout the area visited and especially in Urgun, are in a pitiful condition. Some people are rebuilding their houses but there is a shortage of timber for the roofing, doors and windows. In Urgun, as most of the buildings (schools, hotels, shops, houses, etc.) have walls, only pre-cast beams and slabs for roofs are required. Therefore, these buildings can be reconstructed at a reasonable price. At Urgun a group of ESAR engineers is already present for the construction of a warehouse, which is nearly completed.

Shelter Now International (SNI) had planned to install a pre-fabricated concrete slab and beam factory in Urgun, but they have changed their plan. It is recommended for SNI to reconsider their decision, as it would be helpful to the area.

Reconstruction of schools, clinics and hospitals all over the province was requested.

5. Mines

There was a great awareness of the danger of mines and a great interest in getting assistance to clear the mines. The UNOCA representative on the team was busy explaining to Shuras about the de-mining programme and talking to other people. There was a general feeling that young Afghans, who had been trained in the de-mining programme, should be strongly encouraged to go to the province and assist there in training the local people in clearing the mines. A separate report on the findings of the de-mining team member is included as an annex.

IV. ECONOMIC ACTIVITIES

1. Agriculture

As the mission had no agriculturist among its members, it was not able to gather any significant data on the harvest and crops. As to more detailed information on agriculture, reference is made to the surveys of the Swedish Committee.

2. Irrigation

Although Paktika Province has some flat areas suitable for agriculture, both lalmi and irrigated land is limited. Agriculture is generally poor due to shortage of water. Water is usually taken from karezes, creeks or dug wells. Over half of the karezes and irrigation systems are said to be either destroyed or damaged due to bombing and mining, or through lack of maintenance.

Most of the irrigation canals and karezes, therefore, cannot be used. Some need a considerable amount of work to become operational again. A number of karezes are being cleaned and repaired by VITA (see Annex 4). The repair, cleaning of karezes and irrigation canals and headwork provides an excellent opportunity for the UN funding agencies to stimulate the recovery of Paktika Province. The prospect of increased areas of irrigable land is a major incentive to farmers and their families to return to Afghanistan. The Shuras were optimistic about finding sufficient labour. To increase work opportunities is integral in facilitating repatriation.

The mission saw only one team in the process of cleaning a karez. If resources (i.e. cash or food for work) are to be made available to repair karezes and irrigation canals, the mission feels that sufficient skilled labour will be forthcoming. The repair of karezes and canals, will, in turn, increase employment opportunities in the area, and help to encourage other people to return.

Paktika Province has large flat and fertile land for irrigation, but due to the lack of water only small pieces of land are farmed in the areas around villages and rivers. There are about 60 karezes in Sorobi, 160 in Urgun, 80 in Sharan, 270 in Katawaz, 240 in Waza Khwa and 30 in Gomal. SCA and VITA have taken part in cleaning some of them. Some areas get water from creeks through local headworks and canals, especially in the Gomal area. The Palto dam in Sharan and the Zam diversion dam near Urgun are also important.

In Waza Khwa and Katawaz, people use 22 HP Diesel-operated waterpumps to irrigate their land from local dug shallow wells. In the Katawaz area there are, reportedly, about 2.000 waterpumps. The availability and cost of fuel is a big problem to the operation of these waterpumps.

Prior to further development of waterpumps, the pre-war report prepared by FAO (UN Special Fund) about groundwater in the Katawaz area, should be studied carefully, to know the amount of recharge of the aquifers in that area. It is feared that if the number of waterpumps increases, the underground water resources could be depleted, thereby having a detrimental effect on the present karez system.

The mission recommends that a number of projects be implemented by RAFA/Paktika and NGOs working inside Afghanistan, immediately. A Project Agreement covering these projects should be drawn up, including the provision of funds for the purchase of tools and equipment.

First priority should be given to karez-cleaning and rehabilitation of existing wells in each of the districts of Sorobi, Urgun, Sharan, Zarghun Shah, Waza Khwa and Gomal. The needs must be further specified and quantified. Coordination is needed with the NGOs already operating in the area.

In discussions with Shuras a number of other wishes were expressed:

- Rehabilitation of Palto Diversion Dam in Sharan and related structures.

- Rehabilitation of Zam Diversion Dam and canal.

- Intake of the Khairmenzi canal in Gomal and the protection of dikes in that area.

All these items need a further study, and it was therefore very unfortunate that the FAO-designated hydrologist had to withdraw from the mission. A hydrologist and/or water engineers should make in-depth studies to identify the specific needs and provide costings.

In future, UN experts, the START team and NGOs (e.g. SCA), in cooperation with RAFA/Paktika, should survey all the relevant projects in the area and submit the proposals for further action.

3. Food aid: RAFA/WFP Agreement

One of the main aims of the mission was to monitor Project AFG/11/RAFA. Under this project 1.000 tons of wheat were delivered to the following locations on the dates indicated:

Place	Tonnage to be delivered	Tonnage actually delivered	Date
Spera	100	100	16/6
Sharan	200	200	11/6
Zarghun Shah	200	200	29/5
Waza Khwa	200	200	15/6
Gomal	100	0	-
Urgun	200	100	May/June
Unspecified		10	-

The total tonnage delivered was 810. The balance, 190 Mt, was hijacked in (location), apparently by Commander Md. Agha and sold. After representations by WFP and RAFA, he has apparently agreed to reimburse the amount to RAFA. The mission did not hear evidence that this amount had yet been received.

Warehousing arrangements are referred to under Section III.3 above. The mission concluded that the temporary warehousing of the wheat was adequate in the circumstances.

In each of the distribution centres visited, RAFA had made detailed lists of beneficiaries. These were reported to comprise mainly the disabled, widows and Mullahs. These lists had been made in each case in close consultation with the Shuras. The mission checked the lists. As far as the mission could gather, the wheat had been widely distributed.

It seems that the wheat provided by WFP did not affect the food market in the districts concerned.

Although it must be emphasized that mission members did not meet large numbers of people, the mission did not encounter any visible evidence of malnutrition and no direct demands for free food distribution were expressed. Food for work programmes were favoured, for example in connection with road repair, school and hospital reconstruction, etc.

In order for the UN to be in a position to implement projects in these sectors, regular operational missions, for example in the form of a SMU, will be required. Only when the UN has an established presence in the province will it be possible to undertake detailed monitoring and evaluation of projects of this kind.

4. Commercial activities

As mentioned earlier, many of the former old town centres, like Sorobi, Urgun, Sharan, Zarghun Shah, Waza Khwa and Gomal, are practically abandoned and very few people are living there. There were, in some of the smaller villages on the route, and sometimes at the small tracks the mission was taking, a certain commercial activity. One cannot talk about real bazaar areas, but there were some shops here and there, selling clothes, sugar, rice, tea, soup, shoes, house appliances, car parts, fuel, etc.

For food prices see Annex 5.c.

V. SOCIAL CONDITIONS

1. Health

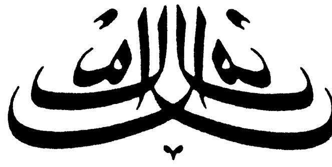
Although the mission had no health expert on the team, some observations were made, without the mission being able to go into detail. The Salam 6 mission reported that there was no evidence of any regular health service functioning in the villages visited. Apparently a certain improvement in the same villages has taken place. The mission was able to visit clinics at Sorobi, Urgun, Sharan and Zarghun Shah. Nevertheless, they are fairly primitive, so the need for an adequate health service remains an urgent necessity.

The clinic in Sorobi, located in an old mosque, occupies 2 small rooms. There are no beds and no doctor. With only 2 nurses, no normal medicine consultation could be provided to the people of the villages in this sub-district. SCA had provided drugs, such as: pills, seringes, serum and a consultation kit. However, according to the nurses, it is no longer their intention to supply medicine without the presence of a doctor. Whether the nurses mentioned were fully trained or were basic health workers was not clear.

Apparently 25 people walk every day approximately 8 hours from the surrounding villages to get medicine; the seriously-ill however, have to travel to Pakistan.

Since only about 150 - 200 people, all Mujahedeen and orphans, live in Urgun, since 1985 there has only been one doctor in charge of the clinic. He has to go to Peshawar to get his medicine supply from SCA. The mission was able to visit a house which apparently had been a hospital. A "Food for Work" project could be useful to repair the walls, windows and doors.

In Sharan the mission also visited a hospital. It was informed by RAFA and Shura members of the presence of a doctor, who was unfortunately absent. In Zarghun Shah, the mission visited a newly-opened pharmacy. The pills and other drugs were brought from Kabul to the people living in the area. The mission also visited a clinic run by an Arab NGO, staffed with a doctor and nurse. In Waza Khwa, RAFA wishes to restore the old hospital. There are a few basic health workers, but they have only received 2 or 3 months of training in Peshawar. The mission was told that a private clinic is selling some medicine and the seriously ill will have to be transported to Quetta by truck. In such cases the cost of transportation is Rs. 3.000. There is no clinic in the Gomal area, so people have to go to Sorobi or Urgun or travel to Pakistan for treatment.



OPERATION SALAM

U.N. MISSION II TO PAKTIKA PROVINCE

30 July - 9 August 1989

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2. Education

The observations made by the Salam 6 mission should be retained. There is no evidence of regular education service or facilities in the villages visited by the mission. Several Shuras mentioned education as a top priority. In Sharan the mission was able to visit a school located in a tent. This school, established by 5 parties, includes 5 classes up to grade 5 for the children living in the Katawaz plain. SCA is providing books, pens and pencils, while the curriculum is fixed by the Shura.

Apparently, children over 13 years old must go to Pakistan if they want to receive adequate education. The mission was told that in Waza Khwa, Zarghun Shah and Sorobi, there are small classes organized by the parties and financed by SCA. This NGO is providing teachers in Waza Khwa. It was also said that there is no school nor any educational facilities in Gomal or Sorobi. During a meeting with a Shura and RAFA, it was mentioned that because of the lack of such facilities, many of the older children of the refugee-families remain in Pakistan for their education. Paktika could be a suitable place for a UNESCO pilot project in rehabilitating the school system, e.g. teachers training activities, provision of equipment and books and repair of physical facilities.

3. Disadvantaged Groups

All around the villages visited, the mission saw Kochis, particularly in the following areas: Katawaz plain, Waza Khwa and Gomal. Their living conditions are more deplorable that the people living in the villages.

The mission was able to meet a Kochi-family in the Sharan area and according to the conversation with the head of the family, it seemed the most urgent needs were a veterinarian clinic for their cattle, as well as medicine for themselves. It has been reported that the clinic run by an Arab NGO in Zarghun Shah often has to take care of the animals brought in by the Kochis.

The construction of a veterinarian clinic in Waza Khwa should be given high priority by the UN, while free distribution of wheat to disadvantaged groups in Paktika should also include the Kochis.

VI. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

1. Due to the apparent absence of war activity for a long period of time there seems to be a reasonably good basis for launching projects in Paktika.

2. RAFA should be considered and encouraged as an implementing partner, but needs to be strenghthened, so that the district officers in Paktika can meet local needs.

3. Shuras, commanders, tribal elders, etc. may be encouraged to submit project proposals through the local RAFA office. They should be forwarded to the provincial head office which can submit project proposals for funding directly to the UN or other agencies.

4. The UN should clarify its position towards identifying possible relations of cooperation with Shuras of a considerable broad basis, which operate in unity, e.g. the Gomal-Sorobi-Urgun Shura.

5. NGOs, with relevant experience, should be encouraged to enter Paktika and those already there should extend their activities. As an example the mission points to the Afghan NGO, ESAR, as an implementing partner for the prefabrication of roofing beams and slabs.

6. Due to the immense lack of basic facilities in most places of the province, it will be necessary - if a SMU is to be set up in Paktika - to provide it with adequate shelter, basic facilities and equipment.

7. Emphasis must be given to finding ways of encouraging Afghans who have graduated at the Salam de-mining training programme, to go into the province and train the local people in de-mining.

8. Before a number of projects are launched, it is recommended that no further general assessment missions enter Paktika.

Annex 1

Composition of the mission

The UN participants were:

- Rene Albeck (UNOCA) Team Leader
- Bob Shaw (UNILOG)
- Alex Loriston (WFP)
- Qaseem Naimi (WFP)
- Rahmatullah Khan (UNOCA)

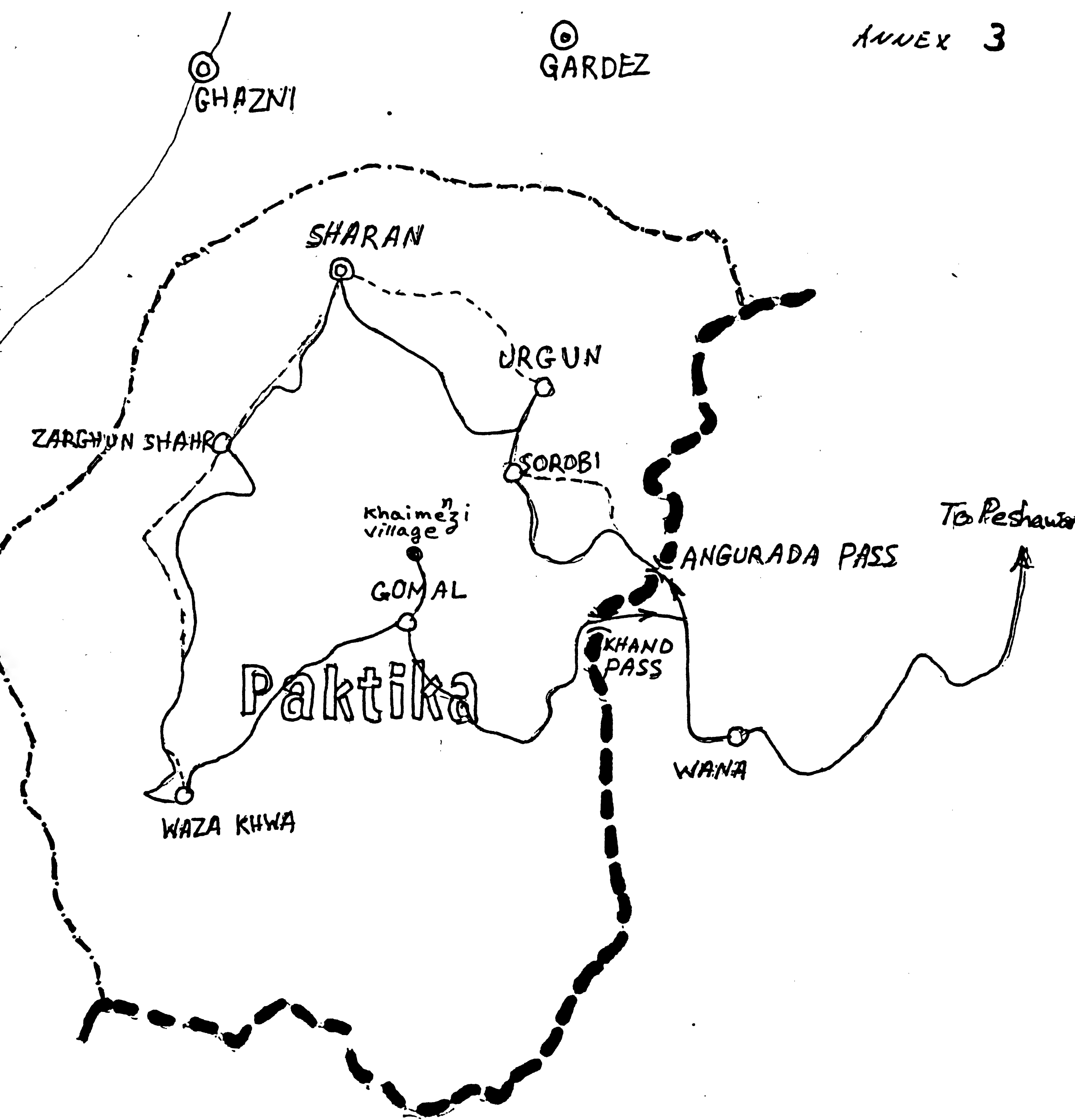
They were accompanied by:

- Abdul Rasheed, RAFA
- C. Suleiman, RAFA

ANNEX 2

Final schedule for Paktika Mission

Sunday 30th July	Leave Peshawar at 05.45 a.m. Arrive at Wana at/around 7.00 pm
Monday 31st July	Leave Wana 6.00 am Arrive at Angoor Adda 11.00 am (escort meets mission) Arrive Sarobi 11.30 pm Stay overnight at Sarobi
Tuesday 1st August	All day in Sarobi and surrounding areas. Stay overnight at Sarobi
Wednesday 2nd August	Leave Sarobi 6.00 am for Urgun Rest of day in Urgun Stay overnight in Urgun
Thursday 3rd August	Leave Urgun at 6.00 am Arrive Sharan at 6.00 pm Stay overnight at Sharan
Friday 4th August	Leave Sharan 1.00 pm Arrive Zarghun Shah 7.00 pm Stay overnight
Saturday 5th August	All day at Zarghun Shah
Sunday 6th August	Leave Zarghun Shah at 6.00 am Arrive Waza Khwa Overnight at Waza Khwa
Monday 7th August	Leave Waza Khwa 7.00 am Arrive Gomal 1.30 pm Overnight at Gomal
Tuesday 8th August	Leave Gomal at 7.00 am Exit at Khand Pass 4.00 pm Arrive at Wana 7.00 pm Stay overnight
Wednesday 9th August	Leave Wana 7.00 am Arrive Peshawar 6.00 pm



PAKISTAN

—— Route taken by Mission

----- Traditional Main Road

Annex 4

Specific Data on Zarghun Shah and Waza Khwa districts

Survey which has been done by VITA

- 85 Villages in Wazakhwa center
- 26 " " Terway subdistrict
- 16 " " Dwachina
- 27 " " Ormoni
- 12 " " Patanay

A total of 166 Villages which includes 6544 Families, 53444-Persons in Wazakhwa district.

- 27 Villages in Zarghoon Shahr center
- 45 " " Yahyakhil
- 50 " " Janikhil
- 30 " " Khoshamand

A total of 152 Villages, 8115 Families, 74512 person in Zarghonshahr district.

- 41 Tractor in Wazakhwa
- 295 Tractor in Katawaz
- 118430 Sheeps in Wazakhwa
- 58220 Sheeps in Katawaz
- 62 Oxen in Wazakhwa
- 101 Oxen in Katawaz

Karez and waterpumps in above mentioned villages

- 244 Karez in Wazakhwa
- 270 Karez in Katawaz
- 48 Waterpumps in Wazakhwa
- 874 " " Katawaz

Compled Projects

In Wazakhwa 65 Karez

In Katawaz 18 Karez

Under Construction

Total in Paktika Province 119 Karez

Transport Rates

The following transport rates were obtained from Afghan truck drivers at Angurada:

Angurada to Ghazni:	Afs. 100 per 7 kg
Angurada to Wardak:	Afs. 150 - 170 per 7 kg

This would normally be a 10-ton truck carrying 7 metric tons.

The following transport rates were obtained from Afghan truck drivers at Mist:

From Angurada	to Zarghun Shah:	Afs. 110/7 kg
" "	to Sharan:	Afs. 100/7 kg
" "	to Ghazni:	Afs. 200/7 kg
" "	to Moqur:	Afs. 200/7 kg
" "	to Wardak:	Afs. 250/7 kg
" "	to Kabul:	Afs. 300/7 kg

FUEL PRICES

1. Wana (Pakistan):

Diesel	Rs. 4.00 per litre
Engine Oil	Rs. 115 per gallon

2. Angurada:

Diesel	Afs 18,000 per drum (200 litres)
Engine Oil	Afs 2000 to 4000 per gallon.

3. Sorobi:

Diesel	Rs. 7.50 per litre
Engine Oil	Rs. 90 per gallon (Castrol)
	Rs. 140 per gallon (Castrol GTX)
Kerosene	Afs 120 per litre

4. Sharan:

Reportedly, not normally available. Very limited supplies kept privately.

5. Mushkhil:

Diesel	Afs 21,000 per drum (200 litres)
Kerosene	Afs 24,000 per drum (200 litres)
Engine Oil	Afs 2,800 per gallon (Castrol GTX: from Kabul)
	Afs 4,800 per gallon (Duckhams SAE 20-50 from Kabul)
	Afs 4,000 per gallon (Duckhams Hypoid SAE 140 from Kabul)

6. Zarghun Shah:

Kerosene	Afs 200 per litre

7. Waza Khwa:

Diesel

FOOD PRICES

1. **Sorobi:**

Rice (Best)	Afs 210 per kg
(Medium)	Afs 160 per kg
(Low)	Afs 112 per kg
Wheat	Afs 550 per 7 kgs
Edible Oil	Afs 2500 per 5 kgs
Tea	Afs 840 per kg
Sugar	Afs 224 per kg
Salt	Afs 30 per kg

2. **Urgun:**

No shops or market place. Mission was informed that all items required had to be obtained elsewhere.

3. **Sharon:**

Shop closed as it was Friday.

4. **Mushkhil:**

Rice (Medium)	Afs 760 per 7 kgs
Rice (Best)	Afs 1200 per 7 kgs
Wheat Flour	Afs 480 per 7 kgs
Edible Oil	Afs 5500 per 16 kgs
Tea (Indian)	Afs 900 per kg
Sugar	Afs 200 per kg
Salt	Afs 250 per 7 kgs

5. **Zarghun Shah:**

Rice	Afs 1000 per 7 kgs (Best)
Wheat	Afs 450 per 7 kgs
Edible Oil	Afs 350 per kg
Tea	Afs 1000 per kg
Salt	Afs 280 per 7 kgs

UN MISSION II TO PAKTIKA, JULY 30 - AUGUST 9, 1989

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Overview

In December 1988 the Salam 6 mission spent 4 days inside Paktika, covering 400 km under extreme bad weather conditions.

The Paktika mission II spent 9 days inside Paktika, covering approximately 800 km. As compared to Salam 6 this mission was favored by good weather, allowing the mission to visit most of the places planned. However, road conditions were so poor that access to certain areas was difficult and the danger of mines made constant deviations necessary, going half of the time through river beds, etc.

The team entered Paktika Province through the Angurada Pass, proceeding to the woluswalis of Sorobi, Urgun, Sharan, Zharghun Shah, Waza Khwa and Gomal, thus covering the main centres of the Province.

The mission agrees with the findings of the Salam 6 mission that the areas visited gave the impression of peace and security. In the local communities it was also stressed that the province of Paktika had been "liberated" almost a year now. Only one night the mission heard gunshots from an anti-aircraft gun. Nevertheless, the danger of mines still preoccupied the minds of the local population.

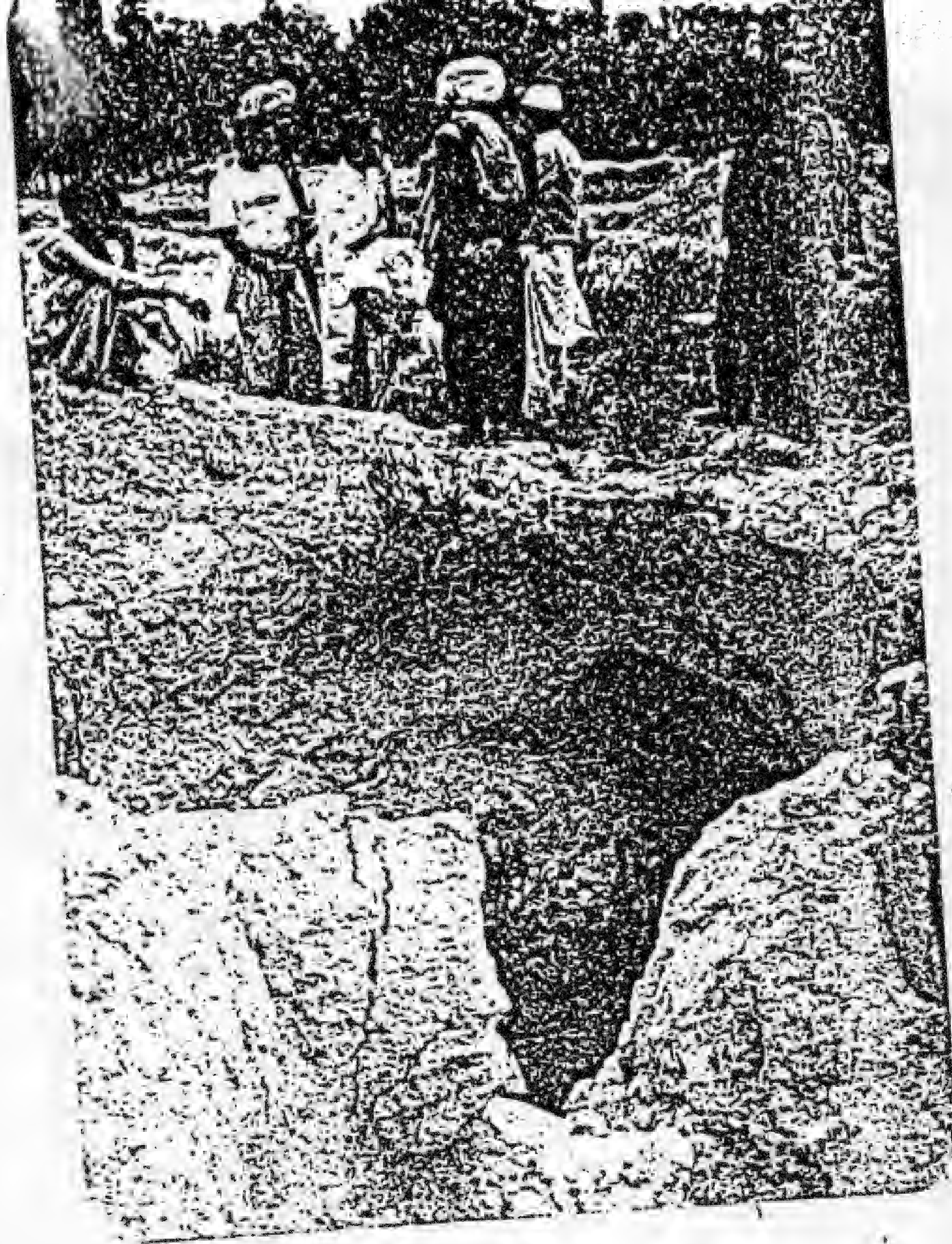
One striking feature was the absence of people in the main towns. In vast areas there were hardly any people. The district capitals of Urgun, Sharan, Zarghun Shah (Khairkot), etc. are ghost towns with ruins of the former governor's house, the former school, the former hospital. Very little reconstruction was going on due to the lack of people. They need everything: repair of the karezes, shelter, reconstruction of the schools, etc. In small villages, however, there are more people and some kind of normal activity. At all centres the mission was warmly welcomed by the Shura and had extensive talks. Great hospitality was extended. One highlight was to make the acquaintance of the impressive Shura of Sorobi, Urgun and Gomal, consisting of the leaders of six of the seven parties in the Alliance. (Professor Mojaddedi's party is apparently not widely present in Paktika.) On some occasions they were hosts to the mission, on others the mission met them in their capacity as mediators in land disputes. Extensive meetings were also held with the Shuras of Sharan, Zarghun Shah and Waza Khwa. Everywhere a warm welcome. The mission was impressed by all the Shuras' strong commitment to reconstruction.



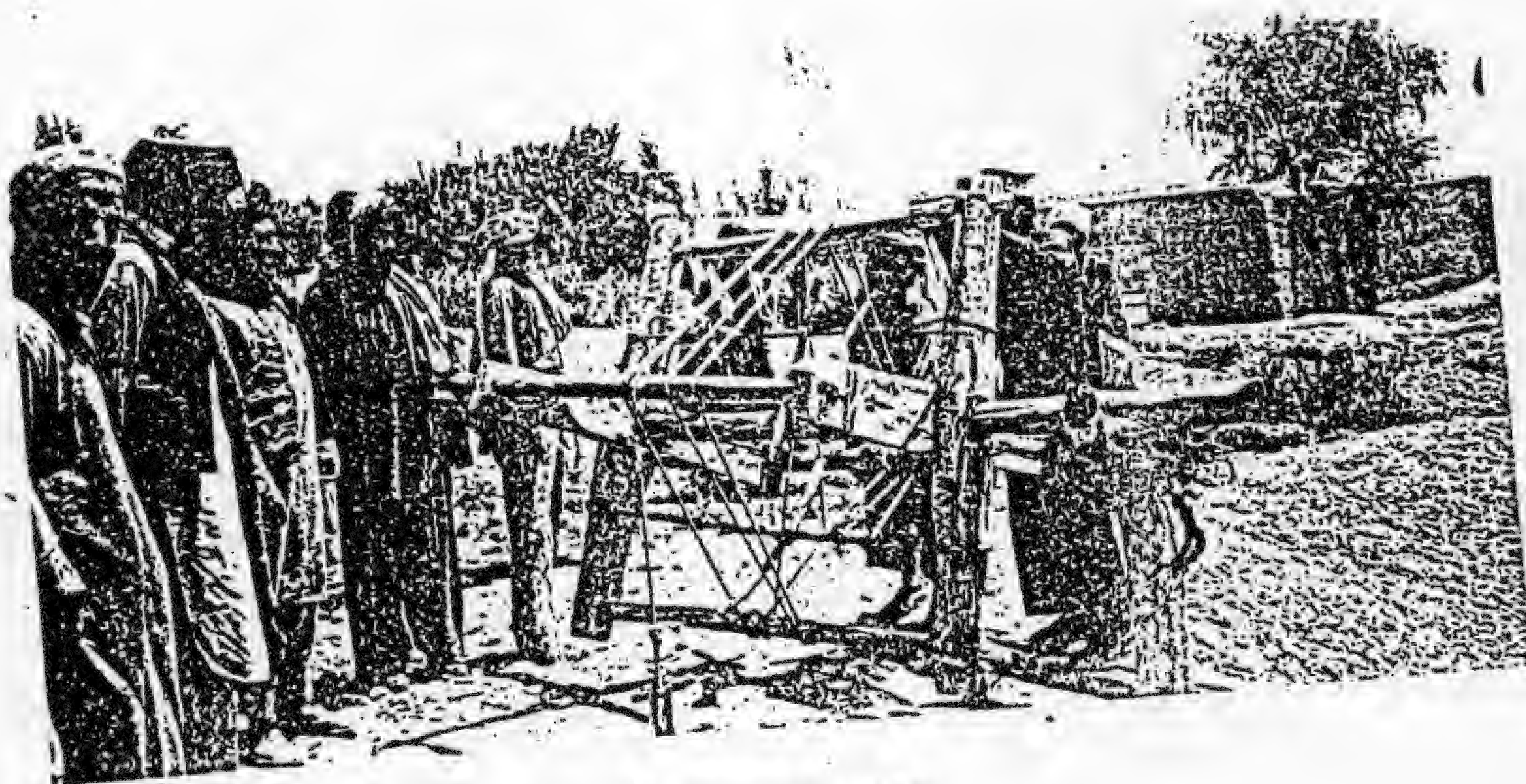
U.N. MISSION WITH ESCORT SETTING OUT FOR THE TRIP.



TYPICAL LANDSCAPE BETWEEN ANGURADA AND SOROBI.



MISSION IS SHOWN AN AREA WITH DESTROYED KAREZES.



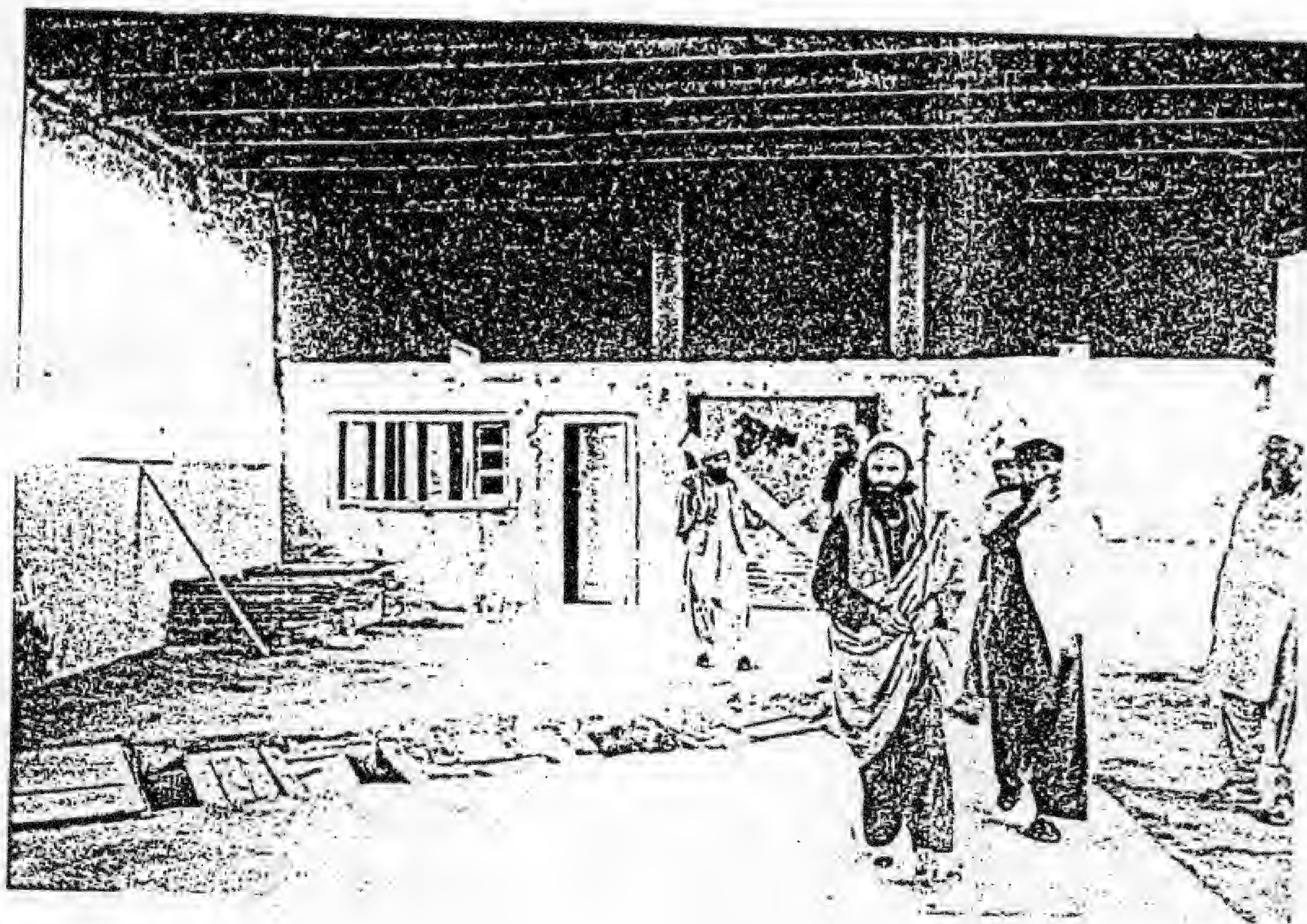
DEMONSTRATION OF KAREZ-REPAIR



TREACHEROUS RAVINE BETWEEN SOROBI AND URGUN



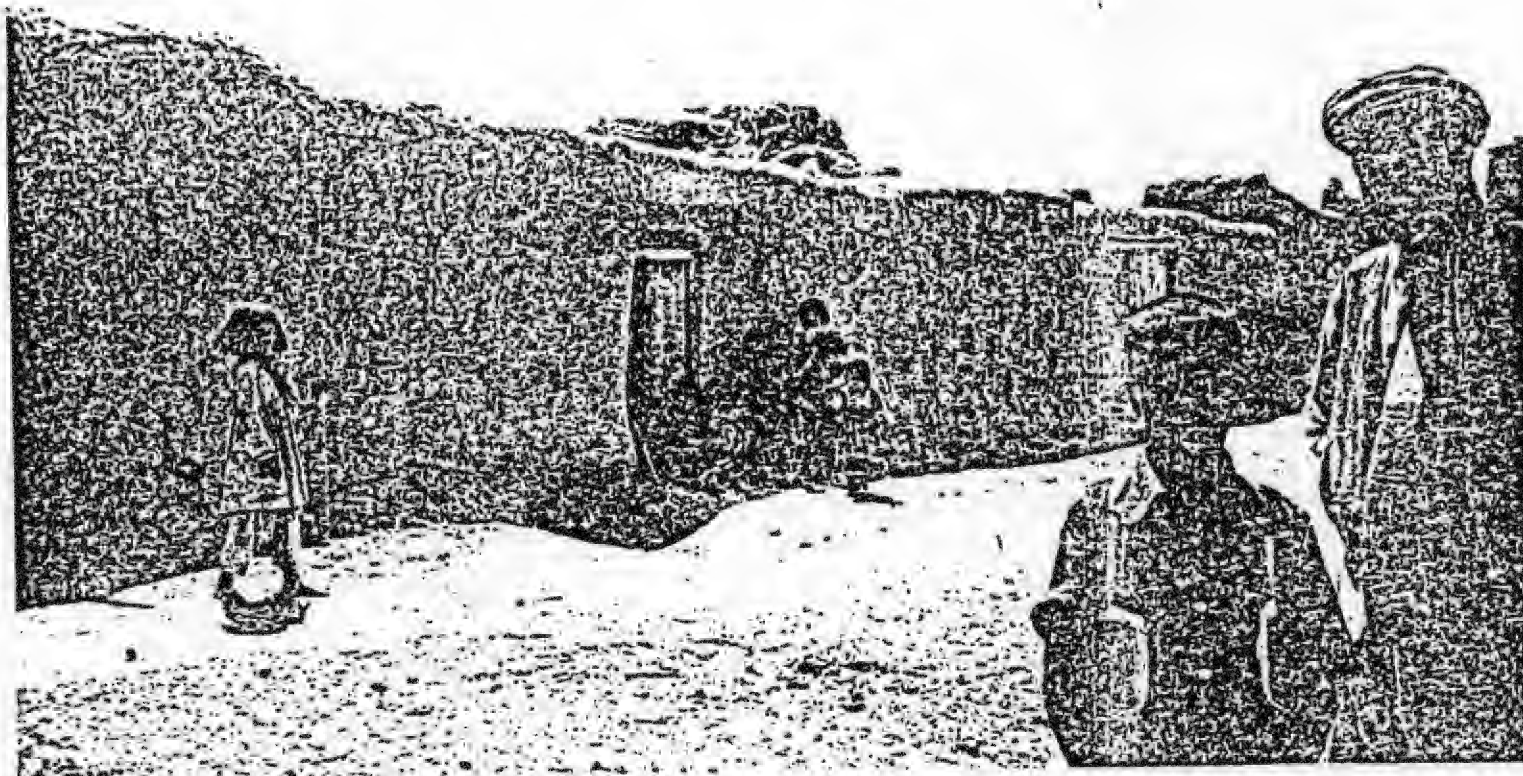
GETTING STUCK IN THE MUD IN THE RIVER BED



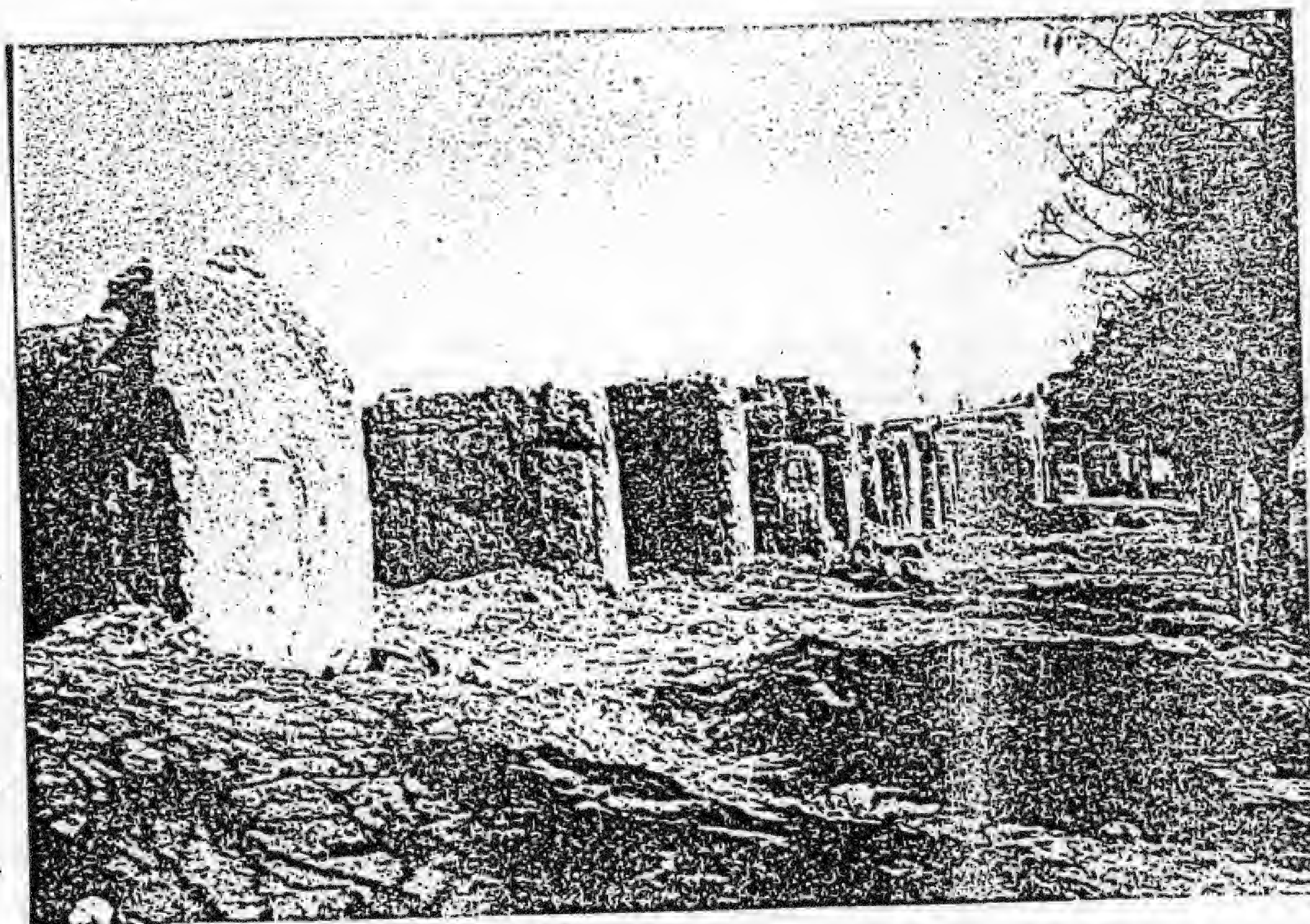
THE RAFA - OFFICE IN URGUN



CONSTRUCTION OF WAREHOUSE IN URGUN



VILLAGE IN THE KATAWAZ - PLAIN



DESTROYED PART OF ZARGHUN SHAH



TAKING NOTES ON TRANSPORT RATES AND FUEL PRICES



TEA WITH VILLAGE ELDERS AND COMMANDERS IN WAZA KHWA

Each Shura stressed: the need to rebuild the karezes, reconstruction of houses and clinics and repair of the roads. Education and rebuilding of schools was mentioned by the Shuras themselves and everywhere there was a great concern over the mine problem. The fact that the mission - for the first time - had an Afghan trained at the UNOCA de-mining programme proved very advantageous, and a keen interest in the de-mining programme was shown.

Very few refugees have returned. The locals explained this by the lack of available shelter and schools for the children, who have already been to school in Pakistan for several years. However, the mission realized how difficult reconstruction will be in areas where there are very few people.

2. Organization of the mission

The mission on the UN side was composed of 4 professionals from UNOCA, UNILOG and WFP, one of whom was Afghan, and 1 Afghan from UNOCA-demining, as well as 2 Afghan drivers. The mission was accompanied by 2 representatives of RAFA.

The whole team travelled in 2 white Land Cruisers with UN markings and equipped with HF radio, backpack and walkie-talkies.

The logistical and security aspects of the mission were placed under the responsibility of RAFA. On the whole trip the mission was escorted by 5 to 6 Mujahedeen, travelling in a pick-up truck. On the advice of RAFA, a pick-up had not been rented for the whole trip, so that it was necessary at each place inside Afghanistan to negotiate the lease or rent of pick-ups. This caused a few delays. It would also have been useful if the newly appointed RAFA-Coordinator for Paktika could have accompanied the mission all the way.

The mission was accommodated overnight thanks to the hospitality of Shuras, commanders, RAFA and two NGOs (ESAR and VITA).

In preparing the mission it was surprising how scarce is material on Paktika Province. This might have to do with the fact that Paktika was pieced together in the Daud-era (1973-78) out of territory originally belonging to the neighbouring provinces of Paktia, Ghazni and Zabul. Statistical material, maps, etc. are, therefore, difficult to obtain.

Besides trying to collect written material before the trip, the team members met in Peshawar 48 hours before the supposed departure. Due to a minor delay, the mission had 72 hours at its disposal, which proved useful. Although one of the WFP participants has a background as a water planning engineer, the team still suffered from the fact that the designated participant from FAO had to withdraw from the mission at the last moment, owing to illness in his family. Thus, a number of issues under agriculture and irrigation could not be fully assessed.

The trip was originally intended to be a monitoring trip for WFP and UNILOG activities, but turned out also to cover a number of issues that an ordinary mission would cover.

3. Meetings with Shuras

At each main centre, the mission met with the entire, or at least with the larger part of the Shura: Gomal-Sorobi-Urgun, Sharan, Zarghun Shah and Waza Khwa. Extensive talks were held with Shuras and commanders and a broad outline of needs discussed.

In particular extensive talks were held with the Shura of the area of Gomal-Sorobi-Urgun, which, in practice and influence, covers about half of the province. The Shuras, and in particular the Shura for Gomal-Sorobi-Urgun, underlined their unity and agreement on how reconstruction should take place. Almost a day and a half was spent with the six leading members of the Shura. They discussed reconstruction issues and took a keen interest in personally escorting the mission to places and areas of need: pointing out karezes, destroyed villages, etc. They informed the mission of plans to hold a province-wide assembly and to elect a governor, in the near future.

There appears to be strong feelings in large parts of Paktika, that Urgun should be the future provincial capital and not Sharan, which was designated in the seventies as the new capital due to its proximity to the main highway Kabul-Ghazni-Kandahar. Historically, Urgun has been considered the main town in the area. However, when visiting Sharan, the mission was not convinced that the people of Sharan shared these views. RAFA has decided to make the office at Urgun the new provincial head office.

The Shuras generally expressed satisfaction and gratitude for the help that so far had been given and no criticism was heard of NGOs operating in the area. There had been some misunderstanding about payments to teams working for karez-repair, but it seemed to have been solved. However, the Shuras stressed that the aid given so far is still only a drop in the ocean.

The areas of need for reconstruction most frequently mentioned were the following:

Irrigation and agriculture

Cleaning and reconstruction of the karezes seems to be generally the top priority. The mission was shown several karezes, some destroyed, some under reconstruction.

Road repair

The need for repairing certain roads and construction of new roads (to avoid mined areas) was stressed. RAFA is involved with this and START has also made a survey. The road from the border to Urgun was, at several points, called the "RAFA road". Before the trip, the mission was informed that the Danish NGO, DACAAR, had submitted plans to the Shura for constructing part of the road. Commander Raouf, who escorted us from Angurada to Urgun, acknowledged that there had been contacts between the commanders and DACAAR. There seemed to be problems of communication/coordination as RAFA is engaged with another organization in building the road, rather than with DACAAR, which is ready with equipment.

Shelter

The mission was shown destruction all over Paktika, and it was also stressed in all meetings with the Shuras, the immense need of shelter. Both construction and repair of existing houses, but also building of schools, hospitals, clinics, etc.

Mines

The subject of the danger of mines was taken up by the Shuras themselves on many occasions and was considered a tremendous problem. Not all Shuras were aware of the Salam de-mining programme and therefore, the UNOCA participant, who had been trained in the Salam de-mining programme, gave the Shuras a briefing about the programme. The Shuras showed a great interest

in this. They asked to have trained Afghans come to the province to train locals, but were also interested in an option to nominate persons to participate in the de-mining training programme at Risalpur or Baleli.

Education

Contrary to what has been mentioned by other missions, the Shuras by themselves took up the problem of lack of education facilities. There is a need both for construction of school buildings and for teaching materials. Some NGOs (Swedish Committee and others) are giving some assistance, but at a limited level. Education for the Kochis was also stressed. As the population is very scattered, the need for boarding schools was mentioned, in particular at high school level. The problem of repatriating families with teenagers was raised, as there are no education facilities available for these young people.

Health

Health issues were also raised frequently. Most former clinics and hospitals were either destroyed or are in very poor shape and are used either as storage facilities or not at all.

There are practically no doctors and nurses. There are a few places where medicine is handed out in a very small shop. Some of it is provided by NGOs (Swedish Committee and others), but the person dispensing it has to go to Peshawar himself to pick up the medicine leaving nobody to look after the clinic. The big Shura mentioned a desperate need for a health centre in each of the districts of Gomal, Sorobi and Urgun.

II. IMPLEMENTING PARTNERS

RAFA has recently, during the last 3 to 4 months, set up six district offices in Paktika: Urgun, Spera, Sharan, Zarghun Shah (Khairkot), Waza Khwa (Vezaha), Gomal. The mission visited all the offices except the one in Spera. The offices still gave the impression of being very newly-established, which meant there was hardly any or no office furniture, stationary, etc. The staff usually consisted of 2 to 3 persons. Printed material introducing RAFA to the local community has been prepared, but has not yet been distributed to the local RAFA offices, due to the illness of the former Province Coordinator. The new Province Coordinator said he would make sure that this material will be distributed.

The staff members at each RAFA office said that they made frequent visits to the local communities and villages in order to inform them of the establishment of the new RAFA office and to inform them that RAFA was proposing to work for them on the reconstruction and rehabilitation in the area. Most RAFA-offices had already assisted local Shuras in drawing up lists of vulnerable groups (see IV.3). In some cases it was the local Shura that had been helpful in finding office space for the local RAFA office and the Shuras were generally favourable towards working with or through RAFA.

The mission's impression was that the local RAFA-offices are not yet capable of carrying out more ambitious projects than the food distribution project described in IV.3. They need help to develop their capacity for planning and implementing projects. Staff training would be an essential first step.

The mission suggested, on various occasions, that the local community, the Shura, etc. should consider submitting project proposals through the local RAFA office. Although there was a positive attitude towards RAFA, this idea seemed to come as a new one for many of the people we spoke to.

During the trip the mission had an opportunity to meet some NGOs operating in Paktika and to see their projects: VITA, Swedish Committee and ESAR (Engineering Service for Afghan Refugees). The mission is aware that other NGOs operate in the province and can certainly see the need for more NGOs to work there.

III. PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

1. Roads and Logistics

It is very difficult to define any part of the route that the mission travelled on as a "road", as much of the mileage covered was in riverbeds. When going across the plains, one was usually following a rutted track.

The Mission departed from Pakistan by going through Wana, Azam Warsak, Zli Gate and over the Angurada Pass. Azam Warsak is quite a large trading/transport centre for cargo crossing the border, as is Angurada on the Afghanistan side. At Angurada there were large stocks of timber and scrap iron destined for Pakistan.

While proceeding to Angurada it was observed, surprisingly, that some cargo trucks were travelling empty. It was learnt later that trucks going from Pakistan into Afghanistan had to transfer their cargo at Azam Warsak into local (tribal) trucks for the trip to Angurada, at which point the cargo was transferred again to the original truck. The transportation charges from Azam Warsak to Angurada was Rs. 18 per bag and Rs. 2 for loading or unloading (irrespective whether the bag was 100 kg or 50 kg). The only cargo not subject to this restriction were military hardware and medecines. It was also learnt that Afghan-owned trucks that were not registered in Pakistan, were only allowed to travel up to Angurada and not any closer to the border. In this way the tribal truck operators at Azam Warsak monopolize the market; i.e. cargo transportation between Azam Warsak and Angurada and vice-versa.

About 7 kilometers after leaving Angurada on the way to Sorobi, the mission was informed by RAFA colleagues that this was the start of a new road being constructed by RAFA with the agreement of the Shuras. The mission was informed that work on the road had started about 2 months before. While at some places it was obvious that a small bulldozer or tractor with a front-mounted blade had been used, at other places the road just ran over barren land and through riverbeds. In a meeting with some NGOs in Peshawar, prior to the mission's departure, it was learnt that the Danish NGO, DACAAR, had plans to assist in road construction in Paktika. It is understood that the "RAFA" road is the one DACAAR would assist with. Apparently, DACAAR already has machinery in Pakistan and is ready to start work across the border.

After about 5 km the vehicles had to divert from the RAFA road because a planned pass over the hills had not yet been constructed. Apparently the road had not yet been opened for regular traffic. The mission did not see any signs of construction work in progress. When asked why there was a need for a new road, compared to the upgrading of the old one, the mission was informed that the original road was not safe, as it crossed private land (of Commander Md. Agha, who had previously hijacked UN wheat).

The road from Sorobi to Urgun, which is on the plain, runs along dirt tracks and riverbeds. This road is about 25 km, with a very extensive mine field starting 11 - 12 km before Urgun. Once the mines have been removed, road improvement would be possible with a grader and roller.

The most direct road from Urgun to Sharan was, in places, quite heavily mined and there were many detours. It was, therefore, necessary for the mission to go from Sorobi to Sharan using more or less the same route as Salam 6 did in December 1988. The road appeared to be a commercial route between the 2 towns, despite the very difficult terrain: soon after leaving Sorobi it goes up into sparsely pine-tree covered hills, then into a very treacherous ravine and consequently onto the Katawaz plain at Sharan. From Sharan to Zarghun Shah, the route was a flat dirt-track along the plain.

From Zarghun Shah to Waza Khwa again the mission diverted from the normal road, this time partly due to the fact that the escort vehicle had to drop off some people (who had consulted the clinic at Zarghun Shah) at their villages. The road, again, was a dirt-track, going through plains and rolling hills (and riverbeds!).

The route from Waza Khwa to Gomal (Fort), went through more mountainous and very desolate terrain, mostly through riverbeds. After leaving Waza Khwa, until approaching Gomal, there was no sign of life and no vehicle traffic for about 60 to 70 km.

As reported by Salam 6, after leaving Gomal, there is "a comparatively good track in the Gomal river area and across the Khand Pass into Pakistan, reportedly built rather recently..."

UN MISSION 2 TO PAKTIKA
PROVINCE

30 JULY -- 9 AUG 1989

OPERATION SALAM

United Nations Humanitarian
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Programmes relating
to Afghanistan